

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 AID-20 IGA-02 OMB-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 EB-11 TRSE-00 DRC-01 /125 W

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R 061140Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5702

INFO COMUSMACTHAI

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 12709

E.O 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, TH.

SUBJECT: MILK

REFS: A. STATE 169022 B. MACTHAI 050355Z AUG 74

1. FORTUITOUSLY PROBLEM OF DUTY-FREE MILK SUPPLIES HAD BEEN ALLEVIATED AT LEAST TEMPORARILY IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO RECEIPT OF DEPARTMENT'S QUERY (REF A) AND MILK SUPPLIES STARTED TO FLOW OUT TO THE BASES AUGUST 5 REF B).

2. CLEARANCE OF SPECIAL SUPPLIES DUTY FREE FOR USE OF FOREMOST DAIRY IN PREPARING MILK AND OTHER DAIRY PRODUCTS FOR AMERICAN MILITARY AND DEPENDENTS HAS LONG BEEN CONTROVERSIAL WITHIN RTG. AS DEPARTMENT ILL RECALL, IN PREVIOUS YEARS THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN EXTENDED PERIODS WHEN INGREDIENTS HELD UP PENDING DECISION BY RTG.

3. IN MARCH 1974, GENERAL KRINGSAK ASSURED EMBASSY AND OMUSMACTHAI THAT CONTINUED IMPORTS OF MILK INGREDIENTS WOULD BE PERMITTED WITHOUT POLICY REVIEW AS OF APRIL ANNUAL RENEWAL OF CLEARANCE AUTHORITY. HOWEVER, IT APPEARS THAT ACTUAL PAPERS SENT BY SUPREME COMMAND TO MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WENT ASTRAY WITHIN MINISTRY OF DEFENSE. FOLLOWING MAY CABINET CRISIS, FILE WAS REFERRED TO NEWLY-APPOINTED MINDEF, WHO WAS UNFAMILIAR WITH HISTORY AND PROPOSED TO RAISE
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SUBJECT WITH CABINET. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD REPEATEDLY THAT MILK WAS

ON CABINET AGENDA, BUT WAS NOT DISCUSSED BECAUSE OF MORE PRESSING PROBLEMS.

4. FOREMOST MILITARY MILK AND OTHER DAIRY PRODUCT SUPPLIES WERE EXHAUSTED LATE JUNE, ALTHOUGH BASIC NEEDS HAVE BEEN MET TO A DEGREE BY USE OF COMMERCIAL POWDERED AND CANNED MILK PREPARATIONS.

5. GENERAL KRINAGSAK, WHO WAS PERSONALLY EMBASSED BY INTERVENTION OF MINDEF, INFORMED COMUSMACTHAI ON AUGUST 1 THAT HE WOULD CLEAR BACKLOGGED MILK INGREDIENTS 'ON HIS OWN AUTHORITY'. PAPERS PASSED THROUGH RTG CHANNELS AND FIRST INGREDIENTS REACHED FOREMOST DAIRY AUGUST 4, WHICH ALLOWED PRODUCT DELIVERS TO RESUME AS NOTED AUGUST 5.

6. COMMENT DUTY -FREE CLEARANCE OF MILK INGREDIENTS TO ALLOW SEPARATE PRODUCTION FOR US MILITARY FORCES AND AMERICAN OFFICAL COMMUNITY IN THAILAND IS ANOTHER AREA IN WHICH RTG HAS ACCEPTED IN THE PAST THE PRINCIPLE THAT MAJOR PURCHASES FOR US FORCES IN THAILAND SHOULD BE TAX FREE. HOWEVER, INSISTENCE ON MAINTAINING SEPARATE PRODUCTION LINE AND QUALITY STANDARDS FOR PRODUCTS PURCHASED FOR AMERICANS FROM FIRM ALSO SELLING ON THAI DOMESTIC MARKET HAS BEEN CONSTANT REMINDER OF US INSISTENCE ON PRIVILEGED POSITION. ALTHOUGH SUPREME COMMAND HAS AGAIN THIS YEAR SUCCEEDED IN GETTING SOME ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS CLEARED THROUGH THE RELUCTANT MFA AND CUSTOMS DEPARTMENTS, THE ANNUAL HASSLES OVER DUTY FREE MILK HAS COST US HEAVILY IN RTG GOODWILL. KINTNER

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